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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

7 CFR Part 340

[Docket No. APHIS-2015-0057]

RIN 0579-AE15

Importation, Interstate Movement, and Environmental Release of Certain Genetically Engineered Organisms

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed rule; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: We are extending the comment period for our proposed rule that would revise our regulations regarding the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of certain genetically engineered organisms in order to update the regulations in response to advances in genetic engineering and understanding of the plant pest and noxious weed risk posed by genetically engineered organisms, thereby reducing burden for regulated entities whose organisms pose no plant pest or noxious weed risks. This action will allow interested persons additional time to prepare and submit comments.

DATES: The comment period for the proposed rule published on January 19, 2017 (82 FR 7008) is extended. We will consider all comments that we receive on or before June 19, 2017.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2015-0057>.

- Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery: Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2015-0057, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2015-0057> or in our reading room, which is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799-7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Sidney Abel, Assistant Deputy Administrator, Biotechnology Regulatory Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238; (301) 851-3896.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

On January 19, 2017, we published in the Federal Register (82 FR 7008-7039, Docket No. APHIS-2015-0057) a proposal to revise our regulations regarding the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of certain genetically engineered organisms in order to update the regulations in response to advances in genetic engineering and understanding of the plant pest and noxious weed risk posed by genetically engineered organisms, thereby reducing burden for regulated entities whose organisms pose no plant pest or noxious weed risks.

Comments on the proposed rule were required to be received on or before May 19, 2017. We are extending the comment period on Docket No. APHIS-2015-0057 for an additional 30 days. This action will allow interested persons additional time to prepare and submit comments.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7701-7772 and 7781-7786; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 6th day of February 2017.

Michael C. Gregoire,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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